

REPORT TO: CABINET MEMBER ENVIRONMENTAL

DATE: 18 November 2009

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DEPARTMENT –
HALF YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORT 2009/10

WARDS AFFECTED: All

REPORT OF: Peter Moore
Environmental Protection Director

CONTACT OFFICER: David Packard
Assistant Director
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EXEMPT/CONFIDENTIAL: No

PURPOSE/SUMMARY:

To report Departmental progress against the 2009/10 Environmental Protection Department service plan.

REASON WHY DECISION REQUIRED:

Corporate performance management procedures and good practice require that the Cabinet Portfolio holder reviews overall performance against the previously agreed Service Plan.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

To note the performance of the Environmental Protection Department against its key performance indicators and planned activities.

KEY DECISION: No

FORWARD PLAN: No

IMPLEMENTATION DATE: Not relevant

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:**IMPLICATIONS:****Budget/Policy Framework:**

The Environmental Protection Department discharges a number of statutory duties on behalf of Sefton Council and its performance in these areas are under significant external scrutiny.

Financial:

The services of the Environmental Protection Department are being delivered within the available budget.

<u>CAPITAL EXPENDITURE</u>	2006/ 2007 £	2007/ 2008 £	2008/ 2009 £	2009/ 2010 £
Gross Increase in Capital Expenditure				
Funded by:				
Sefton Capital Resources				
Specific Capital Resources				
<u>REVENUE IMPLICATIONS</u>				
Gross Increase in Revenue Expenditure				
Funded by:				
Sefton funded Resources				
Funded from External Resources				
Does the External Funding have an expiry date? Y/N	When?			
How will the service be funded post expiry?				

Legal: Not relevant

Risk Assessment: Not relevant

Asset Management: Not relevant

CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN/VIEWS

Finance Department

CORPORATE OBJECTIVE MONITORING:

<u>Corporate Objective</u>		<u>Positive Impact</u>	<u>Neutral Impact</u>	<u>Negative Impact</u>
1	Creating a Learning Community		√	
2	Creating Safe Communities	√		
3	Jobs and Prosperity	√		
4	Improving Health and Well-Being	√		
5	Environmental Sustainability	√		
6	Creating Inclusive Communities	√		
7	Improving the Quality of Council Services and Strengthening local Democracy	√		
8	Children and Young People		√	

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS RELIED UPON IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT

Environmental Protection Department Service Plan 2009/10

Background

1. The Cabinet Member – Environmental agreed the 2009/10 Environmental Protection Department Service Plan in April 2009. Corporate performance management guidance and best practice requires that performance against key performance indicators and planned activities be reported to the responsible Cabinet Member for appraisal at the half and full year term.
2. This report includes the half-year return with respect to the Environmental Protection Department's contribution to the National Indicators (NI) in the Corporate Plan, which will be reported to Cabinet and Cabinet Member – Performance.
3. The key half-year performance against the 2009/10 Service Plan is outlined below around the areas nationally monitored by performance indicators and statutory returns.

Sustainable Waste Management (NI 191 Residual household waste per household, NI192. Household waste recycled and composted, Sefton LAA NI193 Municipal Waste Landfilled)

4. The Merseyside Waste Strategy requires the parallel tasks of Sefton delivering 40% front end recycling and composting rate in the medium term, whilst progressing the delivery of new waste management contracts for the operation of existing and new waste management facilities to replace landfill for unrecyclable material.
5. The Waste Management and Recycling Contract (WMRC) for managing the household waste recycling centres and waste transfer operations commenced in June 2009. The second, Resource Recovery Contract for the provision of residual waste disposal facilities to replace landfill for waste that cannot be readily recycled is currently at the detailed solution stage.
6. Sefton Council and Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority (MWDA) have agreed a joint LAA target to reduce the amount of municipal waste sent to landfill (NI 193). The three-year plan requires Sefton to at least sustain its recent recycling gains made under its alternating weekly service and for MWDA to improve recycling performance at the four Household Waste Recycling centres in Sefton. The WMRC requires a site investment plan and has financial incentives to improve Household Waste Recycling Centre recycling performance. The current NI 193 performance is around 58% against a target for 20010/11 of 55%.
7. Sefton's combined recycling and composting rate (NI192) for the six months up to October 2009 was ~ 42%, compared to 38% at the end of 2008/09. However, half-year figures are often in excess of end of year performance due to the contribution of garden waste recycling being significantly higher in the first half of the year.

8. Elected Members are currently involved in deliberations regarding the specification for the replacement recycling contract to commence in April 2011.
9. Sefton Council has been managing a £300,000 food waste prevention programme “Love Food Hate Waste” on behalf of the Merseyside and Halton Waste Partnership. The externally funded project has already attained a significant community profile.

Cleaner, Safer, Greener (NI 195 Improved street and environmental cleanliness, levels of graffiti, litter, detritus and fly tipping, NI 196 improved street and environmental cleanliness – fly tipping)

10. Surveying to determine the cleanliness of roads and relevant land in accordance with the guidance provided for NI195 is taking place. As the outcome for this indicator is based on the full quantity of surveys (900) carried out over three periods annually, to take into account seasonal and local variations, a figure cannot be reported at the half-year point.
11. The indications at this stage are that certain aspects of local environmental quality (Graffiti NI195c), elements of which are beyond our direct control, are not on target. This concern has been previously highlighted to the Cabinet Member – Environmental and was referred to in the ‘Proposals for Cleansing Growth’ report to the Cabinet Member Environmental dated 19th November 2008 that was not supported in the budget setting process for 2009/10. The Department is working closely with colleagues in Community Safety to direct the resource available, via the Community Payback scheme operated by the Probation Service, to deal with incidents of graffiti and dog fouling.
12. The Department represents Sefton as a member of the Merseyside Cleaner Safer Greener Partnership, chaired by Keep Britain Tidy. The partnership has been developing a ‘responsible business agreement’, which is due to come to fruition, and will result in a partnership approach, across Merseyside, for the maintenance of the on-street furniture that is owned by a national media company.
13. The Department is currently managing interventions under the Working Neighbourhoods Fund, aimed at improving the opportunities for employment in targeted areas and Stepclever (SLEGI) funding. These projects have been reported to the Cabinet Member – Environmental previously and include:
 - Environmental Hit Squads/Neighbourhood Area Teams
 - Arterial Route Cleaning
 - Enhanced Good Neighbour Skip Service
 - Enhanced Mechanical Sweeping
 - Waste Enforcement
 - Community Engagement

14. Enforcement projects undertaken in the first half of 2009/10 include an ongoing dog fouling exercise named Operation Collar.
15. Following a review of the Litter Enforcement Policy, changes have been approved. As a result, litter enforcement action can now be taken by PCSO's and by other Departments.

Climate Change - NI 188 – Adaptation to Climate Change

16. Several Departments share contribution to the Corporate Climate Change agenda. The Environmental Protection Department is taking an overview of Climate Change related activities and Chairs an internal corporate group where these issues are progressed. The Environmental Protection Department is responsible for progressing the Local Strategic partnership LAA indicator NI 188 – Adaptation to Climate Change and is pursuing delivery through the Economic Development & Sustainability Thematic Group of Sefton Borough Partnership. Momentum towards the necessary input by statutory and allied partners to progress this complex issue is building. The partnership is on target to meet its interim LAA target by the end of 2009/10.

Protecting the Public, Environment and Animal Health through statutory compliance regimes. (NI 182 Satisfaction of business with Local Authority Regulation Services. NI 183 Impact of Local Authority regulatory services on the fair trade environment. NI 184 Food establishments in the area that are broadly compliant with food hygiene law. NI 190 Achievement in meeting standards for the control system for animal health).

Regulatory Reform

17. A key issue for the Department continues to be the changing national regulatory regimes under which the Council's Environmental Health, Trading Standards, Animal Health and Local Licensing enforcement regimes must work. The full medium-term implications of the changes to our regulatory service areas are not yet fully clear, but the Department is keeping a watching brief on developments and key issues are being reported to the Cabinet Member – Environmental and Regulatory and Licensing Committee as they arise.
18. Targeting of resources to the areas where intervention has the greatest community benefit is being pursued through risk based intervention programmes.
19. With pressure to always do more with the same or reducing resources, a regional stakeholder event was held in May, attended by 90% of North West Authorities, to agree the principles of joint project working for public protection purposes. Work on developing the activity plan and constitution is being co-ordinated by Sefton Council as chair of Trading Standards North West.

Performance against Statutory Intervention Programmes

20. Contact with businesses through intervention programmes influence the statutory NI182 result above. However, these work areas are also subject to separate statutory returns and audit by National Regulatory / Governmental Bodies. The headline results at the half year regarding completion of planned intervention programmes are:

- Trading Standards – 57%
- Food Hygiene – 48%
- Food Standards - 36 %
- Health & Safety – 50%
- Industrial Processes – 42%

Requests for Service

21. The Department responded to all 53,170 requests for service during the half year from residents and business, of which of 41,373 related to cleansing services. 89% of all service requests were either resolved or action had been initiated within 5 working days. For interest, the rounded up breakdown of service requests by subject area is listed below with comparative 2008/09, 2007/08 and 2006/07 demand. The first half of the financial year tends to be busier in reactive requests than the second half. The number of bulky item collection requests to the half-year point was 19,770.

Year	2009/10 pt	2008/09	2007/08	2006/07
Total	53,170	132,257	116,378	85,088
Cleansing	41,373	112,074	96,951	64,186
Environmental Health	10,566	17,878	17,406	18,646
Trading Standards	1,231	2,305	2,021	2,236
% Response in 5 working days	CL 88% EH/TS92%	CL 78% EH/TS94%	CL 68% EH/TS89%	89.5

Public Health /Crime Partnerships

22. The Environmental Protection Department plays an important role in the ongoing development of Sefton's Public Health Partnership, with representation on the Leadership, Planning and Delivery and Performance Management Groups, as well as on two of the six themed Sub-Groups (Alcohol and Smoking).

23. Operationally, the work of the Licensing, Trading Standards and Commercial Sections supports the work of the sub-groups, in particular underage sales enforcement initiatives around cigarettes and alcohol, ensuring smoke free enclosed public places and nutritional food standards initiatives provide a significant contribution.
24. Three underage enforcement exercises have been carried out in the first half of the year; one for cigarettes and two for alcohol. The cigarette exercise resulted in three sales and the issue of three warnings. The two alcohol exercises resulted in two sales and the issue of two £80 Fixed Penalty Notices. The alcohol sales offenders also received a warning that their licence to sell alcohol could be reviewed should repeat offences take place.
25. Three further under age sales exercises are planned for the second half of the year.

Financial Management

26. The services of the Environmental Protection Department are being delivered within budget and no significant budgetary variances have been identified at the half-year point.

Sickness Management

27. Rolling annual sickness levels were 5.53%. This is made up of short-term sickness of 1.91% and long-term sickness of 3.62%. This level of sickness absence is above the 4% target, which is considered by many as an ambitious target given the all weather external / physical working requirements of the majority of the Department's workforce. The Department continues to actively manage sickness absence.

Senior Management Changes.

28. Bill Milburn (Environmental Protection Director) has been seconded to assist the Chief Executive in managing the response to the projected corporate budget deficit. Peter Moore (Assistant Director) has been seconded to the post of Environmental Protection Director for the duration of Bill Milburn's absence. Peter Moore's vacated Assistant Director position will not be back filled and his work will be reallocated to the Department's senior management team.